

37 Military Chiefs' Deaths in '52 Set Peacetime Mark in Russia

By William L. Ryan

Associated Press Foreign News Analyst

The Russians ran up something of a peacetime record in 1952 for dead military leaders.

The Soviet press announced the deaths of 37 high-ranking army and navy officers during the year. All the obituaries published in the Soviet press are of persons considered important enough to be given death notices.

The Soviet military leaders continue to die young. The average age in 1952 was 55. The youngest was 44. There was one who reached the ripe age of 80, but the majority were in their middle 50s.

Longevity Disputed.

When the Moscow press began boasting a couple of years ago about how Soviet people live longer than any other, a check was started on military death announcements. The press carried the announcements of 24 deaths in 1950 at the average age of 53, and 26 in 1951, also at the average age of 53.

An obituary in the Communist Party press in the U. S. S. R. is quite a thing. As a general rule it is signed by colleagues of equal rank, so that a dead general is given a sendoff in print by a list of other generals. Thus, a man

has to be important in his line to rate any obituary at all, and likely many generals die without such advertisement.

In any event, the mortality rate still seems rather high—with 1952's rate likely unmatched since the days of the mid-30's purge, when generals were mowed down like wheat before the scythe.

Hint at New Purge.

In the past two years the frequent announcement of deaths of high military leaders aroused speculation that another purge might have been under way quietly and steadily. This thinking was based upon the historically restless nature of Russian armies, traditional hotbeds of plotting.

On the other hand, the Soviet army has more brass than any other, and thus has more generals to lose. In such speculation, thus, it must be conceded that many of the generals and admirals who died did so naturally. But the speculation cannot be put down this easily. For Soviet military men, wrong guessing often has turned out to be a fatal disease—and there has been some indication of Soviet sensitiveness to this kind of speculation in the West.

Among the dead officers are a number from the agencies which supervise the various branches of the Soviet secret police, and sev-

Pol
Kill

CI
pris
stor
of t
theb
Th
auto
polic
twic
car.

Se
he a
ing
spot
and
in a
TI
Jewe
Opti
Se
ente
The
trap
gun
Cag

who were political officers—
representatives of the Communist
in the Army and Navy.
they just died naturally.
they didn't. Anyway, the
system being what it is,
it be blamed for wonder-
but it.

'Voice' Says Red Congress May Replace 60 Party 'Casualties'

By the Associated Press

Prime Minister Stalin's motive in calling a formal Communist Party congress in Moscow October 5 may be to replace 60 key Communists leaders who have died or been purged.

The Voice of America, official State Department radio, hinted that this may be Stalin's motive in summoning Communist bosses together for the first time in 13 years. It was the first thing approximating any official comment from the State Department on this move by Stalin.

A broadcast commenting on Moscow's announcement said of the 139 full Central Committee members:

"At least 26 have (in the past 13 years) died or been purged. Another 34 have not been mentioned in the Soviet press in the last few years.

"This indicates the high mortality rate—political as well as literal—attached to membership in the Central Committee."

The Central Committee is the top-rank organization of Communists elected at each party congress. It in turn elects the 12-man Politburo, which actually runs Russia.

The Voice broadcast, a special commentary by analyst Harry Fleischman, was beamed to Russia and Iron Curtain countries and was featured in nearly all foreign broadcasts Thursday.

In commenting on the Russian plan to abolish the Politburo, it said "one thing can be safely predicted" even when this happens:

"The Soviet Union will remain a dictatorship, run by Joseph Stalin."

Moscow has announced that a "presidium" will be organized to replace the Politburo. Top diplomats believe whoever gets the job of chairman of this

group will be in line to succeed Stalin as Prime Minister.

The Voice broadcast made no mention of this.

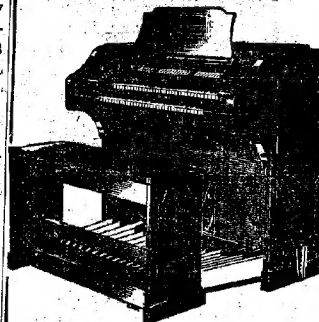
The highlight of the last congress in 1939 was a speech by Stalin that accused the West of trying to foment a war between Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia.

"This statement turned out to be of great significance," said the Voice. "Seen in retrospect, it was an obvious bid for negotiations with Hitler. That bid paved the way for negotiation which led to the Nazi-Soviet pact."

'52 Aid Tops \$2 Million

NEW YORK, Aug. 23 (AP).—Church World Service says it has shipped \$2,187,739 worth of goods—some 6,679,923 pounds of food, clothing, medicine and other articles—to Europe and Asia during the first seven months of 1952.

The BALDWIN ELECTRONIC ORGAN



SPECIAL SURVEYS,
DEMONSTRATIONS

Washington Post.

24 August 1952